

Drinking Water Information

If you own or operate a drinking water system serving a small rural church, mosque, synagogue, temple or other place of worship...

As an owner/operator of a stand-alone drinking water system that serves a small rural church, mosque, synagogue, temple or other place of worship, there are a number of requirements you must meet in order to comply with Ontario's Drinking-Water Systems Regulation (O. Reg. 170/03).

However, many facilities may be able to post signs that exempt them from all testing and treatment requirements of the Drinking-Water Systems Regulation.

The information in this fact sheet will help you determine if your place of worship is required to sample, test and treat your water according to the Drinking-Water Systems Regulation. If these requirements apply to you, this fact sheet will summarize the steps you must take to meet your responsibilities under the regulation.

Places of worship connected to municipal or other regulated systems

If you are connected to, and your water comes directly from a municipal or other drinking water system that meets the treatment and testing requirements of O.Reg. 170/03, and all the piping

in your place of worship is plumbing under the building code, then the Drinking-Water Systems Regulation **does not apply to your place of worship, and nothing is required of you.**

Regulated drinking water systems must meet stringent requirements under the Drinking-Water Systems Regulation (O. Reg. 170/03) to ensure that the water supplied to the homes and other buildings connected to the system is safe.

Places of Worship Using Transported Water

If all the water used by your place of worship is transported from a drinking water system that is regulated under O.Reg.170/03 and meets the treatment and testing requirements of this regulation, then you may be exempt from treatment, operational checks and micro/chemical tests if you test for chlorine residual daily or provide alarmed, non-chlorine-based primary disinfection equipment. Refer to Section 7 of the Drinking-Water Systems Regulation to determine if this exemption does apply to your system.



Sign posting option for places of worship

Many places of worship on their own drinking water systems will have the option to post signs, providing they meet the following conditions. (Posting signs, where allowed, will exempt places of worship indefinitely from the other requirements of the Drinking-Water Systems Regulation, including all testing and treatment requirements.)

Important Note about Posting Signs

You have the option to post signs by June 1, 2005, at your place of worship as long as you meet all of the following conditions:

- Your system does not serve a food service establishment - i.e. you only prepare and serve meals for your members and their personally invited guests and conduct bake sales. If your place of worship rents out food preparation facilities or provides food catering for events such as wedding receptions and dances, you may be a food service establishment, and will have to follow the steps summarized on pages 4 and 5. **You should consult with your local public health unit if you are serving a regulated food service establishment.**
- You do not serve a designated facility such as a children's camp, school or day care. A Sunday school, youth group or baby-sitting service offered in your place of worship would not normally meet the definitions in the regulation of a "designated facility". Owners and operators of drinking water systems serving designated facilities were required to begin testing June 1, 2003. Owners and operators of designated facilities except for seniors' residences not operated for commercial purposes and all children's camps have been responsible for treating their water since July 1, 2003. Seniors' residences not operated for commercial purposes and all children's camps have been required to comply with the treatment requirements of the Drinking-Water Systems Regulation since July 1, 2004.
- Your system is **not** capable of supplying water at a rate greater than 2.9 litres per second. It is unlikely that a small rural place of worship would have this capability. Please check the specifications on your pump or call your pump manufacturer. If your system **is** capable of supplying water at a rate greater than 2.9 litres

per second, then the system serving your place of worship may fall into the category of a large non-municipal, non-residential system. You should refer to the *Kit for Regulated Non-Municipal Drinking Water System Owners*.

You can obtain this kit at

www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/gp/4427e.pdf or by calling 1-800-565-4923.

- You post signs on all taps warning that water has not been tested or treated for drinking water purposes.
- You disconnect all drinking water fountains.
- You use signs provided by or approved by the ministry. They are available free of charge by calling 1-800-565-4923.
- You check the signs at least once a week to ensure they are in place and are legible.
- You keep records of the date and time, and the name of the person who performs each check and keep these records for at least five years.
- You notify the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) when you begin posting signs by completing a *Notice of Intent to Post (Warning) Notices* available on DWIS at: www.ene.gov.on.ca/environet/DWIS/index.htm

Places of worship that must meet the testing and treatment requirements

If your place of worship:

- has a food service establishment served by your drinking water system or
- chooses not to post signs

you should follow the steps summarized on pages 4 and 5. You should also refer to a more detailed kit that is available at www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/gp/4427e.pdf or by calling 1-800-565-4923.

Places of worship in this category must start sampling and testing water by **June 1, 2005**. In addition, places of worship in this category must install treatment equipment by **December 31, 2006** for both surface water and for groundwater. The actions you must take to meet your responsibilities under the Drinking-Water Systems Regulation are summarized on pages 4 and 5.

If your place of worship has a designated facility on site, owners and operators of drinking water systems serving these facilities were required to begin testing June 1, 2003. Owners and operators of designated facilities, except for seniors'

residences not operated for commercial purposes and all children's camps, have been responsible for treating their water since July 1, 2003. Seniors' residences not operated for commercial purposes and all children's camps were required to comply with the treatment requirements of the Drinking-Water Systems Regulation by July 1, 2004.

Maintaining your well

If your source of water is groundwater, you must also properly maintain your well to protect the groundwater supply.

Well owners are responsible for any wells on their property, so it is important that you understand the rules and what you can do to make sure your well is properly constructed and maintained. Ontario's Wells Regulation (O. Reg. 903 under the *Ontario Water Resources Act*) as amended in August 2003, sets out new standards for well construction, location and abandonment that must be followed by well owners and the contractors they hire to construct, repair or seal a well.

To learn more about these standards, please refer to the ministry's website www.ene.gov.on.ca for fact sheets on:

- water well construction
- the protection of water quality in drilled wells
- the protection of water quality in bored or dug wells
- the protection of water quality in jetted and driven point wells.

However, to be certain your well is in compliance, you should review Ontario's Wells Regulation.

This can be viewed on the Ministry of the Environment website at www.ene.gov.on.ca. You can obtain a print copy by calling the ministry's Public Information Centre at 1-800-565-4923. You may also want to consider hiring a licenced well contractor to conduct an inspection.

Please remember that this fact sheet is provided for guidance only. For a complete understanding of your responsibilities as a drinking-water system owner you must refer directly to the Drinking-Water Systems Regulation.

For the most up-to-date fact sheets, a kit explaining your responsibilities in more detail and for copies of the regulation, check the Ministry of the Environment's website at www.ene.gov.on.ca or call the Public Information Centre at 1-800-565-4923.

Steps for Compliance with O. Reg. 170/03 Requirements for a Small Stand-Alone System Serving a Place of Worship

Step 1: Register your drinking water system before June 1, 2005

- To register your system, go to the Drinking Water Information System (DWIS) at: www.ene.gov.on.ca/environet/DWIS/index.htm and follow the online instructions
- Once you have registered, you will be sent an email with your drinking water system number, category, user name and password, usually within one to two business days.
- While the Ministry of the Environment requires electronic submissions of information, you may be authorized to make paper submissions under special circumstances. Please call 1-866-793-2588 for more information about paper submissions.

Step 2: Select a licenced laboratory(ies) to analyze your drinking water samples

- Provide the Ministry of the Environment with information about the licenced laboratory(ies) you will use to analyze your drinking water samples, by filling out a *Laboratory Services Notification Form* which is available on DWIS at: www.ene.gov.on.ca/environet/DWIS/index.htm
- A list of laboratories that are licenced by the Ministry of the Environment to carry out drinking water testing services is available at: www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/water/sdwa/licencedlabs.htm

Step 3: Sampling and testing requirements

- It is your responsibility to know and meet the sampling and testing requirements applicable to your system.

Starting on June 1, 2005.

Microbiological sampling and testing requirements are:

- Raw water samples must be collected **at least once a month**
- Distribution samples (e.g. taken from taps) must be collected:
 - if not chlorinating or chloraminating, **at least once a week**
 - if chlorinating or chloraminating, **once every two weeks**
- **A series of acceptable results over 24 consecutive months may allow you to reduce the frequency of sampling.**

Chemical sampling and testing requirements vary depending on the parameter.

Review Schedule 15 of the Drinking-Water Systems Regulation for the requirements. The regulation is available at www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/water/sdwa/legislation.htm or by calling 1-800-565-4923.

- Nitrate and Nitrite: **At least once every 3 months**
- Sodium and Fluoride: **At least once every 5 years**
- Lead: **At least once every 5 years**

- The way you collect and transport your drinking water samples affects the accuracy of your test results. It is critical that drinking water samples are collected and transported as specified by the laboratory(ies).
- For more information on collecting drinking water samples, refer to *A Kit for Regulated Non-Municipal Drinking-Water System Owners*. You can access the kit online at www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/gp/4427e.pdf or you can order a print copy by calling 1-800-565-4923.

Step 4: Have a “trained person” adjust equipment and conduct operational checks

- Once your treatment deadline comes into effect, ensure a “trained person” performs all necessary adjustments to the water treatment equipment and conducts any required operational checks (e.g. chlorine or turbidity tests).
- The “trained person” designation is obtained through completion of a Director-approved course every three years. More information is available at: www.oetc.on.ca or by calling 1-905-796-2851.

Step 5: Have an engineering evaluation report completed and submit written notice to the Ministry of the Environment

- Hire a professional engineer with experience in sanitary engineering to prepare your engineering evaluation report on the installation of treatment equipment.
- Names of some service providers are available at: www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/gp/4222e_appendix.htm
- If your system began operating **on or after June 1, 2003**, the engineering evaluation report is due **within 30 days** of operation and/or following an alteration to the system.

- If your system began operating **before June 1, 2003**, the report is due within 30 days of: **December 31, 2006 for both surface water and groundwater systems, and after that, within 30 days after any alteration to the system.**
- Submit written notice to the Ministry of the Environment within 7 days of receiving the report using an *Engineering Evaluation Report Notice* available on DWIS at: www.ene.gov.on.ca/environet/DWIS/index.htm
- Do not submit the report to the Ministry of the Environment. Keep it on file and make it available upon request.

Know Your Minimum Treatment Requirements

- Primary Disinfection for groundwater sources.
- Filtration and Primary Disinfection for surface water sources.

TIP! Ultraviolet (UV) units are commonly used to treat water for small systems with groundwater sources. These units have an average starting cost of approximately \$2,000 including alarms.

Step 6: Applying for full relief from requiring any treatment

- You can only apply for full relief from treatment requirements if your drinking water system relies on a groundwater source. Your engineering report should include this information.
- Consult with users of the system and with your local Medical Officer of Health, then summarize comments and responses.
- Submit the summary and provide written notice to the Ministry of the Environment using the appropriate application. Refer to the *Guide for Applying for Approvals Related to Municipal and Non-Municipal Drinking-Water Systems* available at: www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/gp/4467e.pdf

Step 7: Notify authorities of adverse test results and other problems

- As soon as you become aware of an adverse test result or if you observe that your drinking water system is not properly disinfecting water that is being directed to users, immediately contact your local Medical Officer of Health AND the Ministry of the Environment Spills Action Centre (SAC). You can reach SAC at 1-800-268-6060.
- Submit written notice to both of the above authorities within 24 hours using the *Written Notification of Adverse Water Quality Incident*

form available on DWIS at:

- www.ene.gov.on.ca/environet/DWIS/index.htm
- Submit written notice to the ministry and the local Medical Officer of Health of action taken and results achieved within 7 days after the issue is resolved using the *Written Notification of Adverse Water Quality Incident* form available on DWIS at: www.ene.gov.on.ca/environet/DWIS/index.htm

Step 8: Take corrective action

- Refer to Schedule 18 of the Drinking-Water Systems Regulation for the actions you must take following adverse test results or other problems.
- Where required, post warning notices in prominent locations where they are likely to be seen by those using water from the system.
- Obtain Ministry of the Environment-approved warning notices by calling 1-800-565-4923.

Step 9: Submit an annual report

- The Drinking-Water Systems Regulation requires that all regulated drinking water systems submit an annual report.
- The first Annual Report is due to the Ministry of the Environment by May 31, 2006 and covers the reporting period from June 2005 through to March 2006.
- Submit the report to the Ministry of the Environment using the *Annual Report* format available on DWIS at: www.ene.gov.on.ca/environet/DWIS/index.htm

Step 10: Make information available to the public

- Keep copies of the following reports on site, and make them available on request, free of charge, during normal business hours:
 - annual reports for the last 2 years
 - Engineering Evaluation Reports for the last 2 years
 - all required test results, approvals and orders issued for the last 2 years
 - a copy of the Drinking-Water Systems Regulation (O. Reg. 170/03)

If you would like more information, please contact the Ministry of the Environment's Public Information Centre at: 1-800-565-4923.

You may access all the documents including the Drinking-Water Systems Regulation (O. Reg. 170/03) and all DWIS Notices and Reports at www.ene.gov.on.ca